

II. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) An incontinence article, comprising:
 - a front portion;
 - a rear portion joined to the front portion; and
 - a back guard extending vertically from the rear portion above the front portion to a middle back area of a user.
2. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 1, further comprising tabs for coupling the front portion to the rear portion.
3. (Previously Presented) The incontinence article of claim 1, wherein the back guard further comprises an absorbent material located centrally on the back guard.
4. (Previously Presented) The incontinence article of claim 3, wherein the back guard further comprises opposing side portions and a top portion, and wherein elastic is positioned at a predetermined location along a periphery of the back guard.
5. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 4, wherein the elastic is positioned along the top portion.

6. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 4, wherein the elastic is positioned along the side portions.

7. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 4, wherein the elastic is positioned along the top portion and the side portions.

8. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 4, wherein the side portions are curved.

9. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 4, wherein the side portions are linear.

10. (Currently Amended) The incontinence article of claim 1, wherein the back guard ~~has a~~ length of approximately extends vertically 1.0 to 10.0 inches above the front portion.

11. (Currently Amended) The incontinence article of claim 1, wherein the back guard ~~has a~~ length of approximately extends vertically 3.0 to 10.0 inches above the front portion.

12. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 1, wherein the back guard is curved.

13. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 1, wherein the back guard has a width approximately equal to a width of the rear portion.

14. (Previously Presented) An incontinence article, comprising:

a front portion;

a rear portion joined to the front portion; and

a back guard extending from the rear portion, wherein the back guard extends above the rear portion and the front portion by a length of approximately 1.0 to 10.0 inches when the article is worn by a user, and wherein the back guard includes an absorbent material.

15. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 14, wherein the back guard further comprises elastic positioned along a periphery of the back guard, and wherein the elastic is positioned in a different location on the back guard than the absorbent material.

16. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 15, wherein the back guard further comprises opposing side portions and a top portion, and wherein the elastic is positioned at a predetermined location about the portions.

17. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 16, wherein the opposing side portions are curved.

18. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 16, wherein the opposing side portions are linear.

19. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 15, wherein the back guard further is curved, and wherein the elastic is positioned at a predetermined location about a periphery of the curved back guard.

20. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 14, wherein the back guard has a length of approximately 3.0 to 10.0 inches.

21. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 14, wherein the back guard extends to a middle back area of a user.

22. (Previously Presented) An incontinence article, comprising:

a front portion;

a rear portion joined to the front portion; and

a back guard extending above the rear portion and the front portion when the article is worn by a user, wherein the back guard comprises an absorbent material and a separately positioned elastic.

23. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 22, wherein the elastic is positioned at a predetermined location about a periphery of the back guard, and wherein the absorbent material is positioned centrally on the back guard.

24. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 22, wherein the back guard further comprises opposing side portions and a top portion.

25. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 24, wherein the side portions are curved.

26. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 24, wherein the side portions are linear.

27. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 22, wherein the back guard is curved.

28. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 22, wherein the back guard has a length of approximately 1.0 to 10.0 inches, and wherein the back guard extends to a middle back area of a user.

29. (Currently Amended) An incontinence article, comprising:

- a front portion for contacting a front side of a user;

- a rear portion for contacting a rear side of the user;

- a crotch portion joining the front portion to the rear portion;

- a back guard extending vertically from the rear portion above the front portion to a

middle back area of a user, wherein the back guard has:

- a length of approximately 1.0 to 10.0 inches;

- an absorbent material positioned centrally on the back guard; and

- elastic positioned about a periphery of the back guard.

30. (Previously Presented) An incontinence article, comprising:

a front portion;

a rear portion joined to the front portion; and

a back guard extending above the rear portion and the front portion when the article is worn by a user, wherein the back guard comprises a vertical extension and opposing horizontal extensions.

31. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 30, wherein the back guard further comprises an absorbent material and separately positioned elastic.

32. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 31, wherein the elastic is positioned at a predetermined location about a periphery of the back guard.

33. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 31, wherein the elastic is positioned about a periphery of the horizontal extensions.

34. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 31, wherein the elastic is positioned about a periphery of the vertical extension.

35. (Previously Presented) The incontinence article of claim 31, wherein the elastic is positioned about a periphery of the horizontal extensions and a periphery of the vertical extensions.

36. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 30, wherein the back guard has a width greater than a width of the rear portion.

37. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 30, wherein the vertical extension includes opposing side portions and a top portion.

38. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 30, wherein the horizontal extensions diagonally couple to the front portion.

39. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 30, wherein the horizontal extensions laterally couple to the front portion.

40. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 30, wherein the vertical extension extends to a middle back area of a user.

41. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 30, wherein the vertical extension has a length of approximately 1.0 to 10.0 inches.

42. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 30, wherein each horizontal extension has a length of approximately 1.0 to 10.0 inches.

43. (Currently Amended) An incontinence article with a back guard, comprising:

a front portion;

a rear portion joined to the front portion; and

a back guard extending vertically from the rear portion above the front portion to a middle back area of a user, wherein the back guard comprises a vertical extension and opposing horizontal extensions, and wherein the back guard includes an absorbent material.

44. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 43, wherein the back guard further comprises elastic positioned at about a periphery of the back guard, and wherein the absorbent material is positioned centrally on the back guard.

45. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 44, wherein the elastic is positioned about a periphery of the horizontal extensions.

46. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 44, wherein the elastic is positioned about a periphery of the vertical extension.

47. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 44, wherein the elastic is positioned about a periphery of the vertical extension and the horizontal extension.

48. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 43, wherein the back guard has a width greater than a width of the rear portion.

49. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 43, wherein the rear portion and the horizontal extensions couple to the front portion.

50. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 43, wherein the vertical extension includes opposing side portions and a top portion.

51. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 43, wherein the vertical extension has a length of approximately 1.0 to 10.0 inches.

52. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 43, wherein each horizontal extension has a length of approximately 1.0 to 10.0 inches.

53. (Currently Amended) An incontinence article, comprising:

a front portion;

a rear portion joined to the front portion; and

a back guard extending vertically from the rear portion above the front portion to a middle back area of a user, wherein the back guard comprises a vertical extension having a length of approximately 1.0 to 10.0 inches and opposing horizontal extensions each having a length of approximately 1.0 to 10.0 inches, and wherein the back guard includes an absorbent material and elastic.

54. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 53, wherein the absorbent material and the elastic are separately positioned.

55. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 53, wherein the absorbent material and the elastic are commonly positioned.

56. (Previously Presented) An incontinence article, comprising:

a front portion;

a front guard extending vertically from the front portion to a middle chest area of a user;

a rear portion joined to the front portion;

a back guard extending vertically from the rear portion to a middle back area of a user;

and

wherein the front and rear portions each comprise an absorbent material.

57. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 56, wherein the front guard and the back guard each further comprise a centrally positioned absorbent material.

58. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 57, wherein the front guard and the rear guard each further comprise elastic positioned about a periphery thereof.

59. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 56, wherein the front guard and the back guard each have a length of approximately 1.0 to 10.0 inches.

60. (Previously Presented) An incontinence article, comprising:

a front portion;

a rear portion joined to the front portion; and

a back guard extending above the rear portion and the front portion when the article is worn by a user, wherein the back guard comprises an absorbent material and elastic.

61. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 60, wherein the back guard extends to a middle back area of a user.

62. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 60, wherein the elastic and absorbent material are commonly positioned.

63. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 60, wherein the elastic and absorbent material are separately positioned.